

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 AGR-05 USIA-06 AID-05 EB-07 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07

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FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UN, EAGR, OCON

SUBJECT: WORLD FOOD COUNCIL SECRETARIAT'S LETTER TRANSMITTING
REPORT OF SECOND COUNCIL MEETING ALSO REQUESTS US VIEWS AND
SUPPORT IN IMPROVEMENT OF WFC WORK PROCEDURES

SUMMARY

IN USUAL WORLD FOOD COUNCIL SECRETARIAT PROCEDURE, WFC EXE-
CUTIVE DIRECTOR JOHN HANNAH HAS SENT US REPRESENTATIVE TO FAO
A LETTER DATED JUNE 30 (RECEIVED JULY 7) TRANSMITTING THE
REPORT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE COUNCIL, JUNE 14-16,
ADDRESSED PERSONALLY TO THE HEAD OF THE US DELEGATION TO THAT
MEETING--UNDER SECRETARY FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS SISCO. WE
TRANSMIT THE LETTER TELEGRAPHICALLY BECAUSE IT ALSO ASKS
US ADVICE ON HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE NEXT MEETING, AND US ASSIS-
TANCE IN EFFORTS IN VARIOUS UN BODIES TO STRENGTHEN THE WORLD
FOOD COUNCIL. ALTHOUGH THE 1976 MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WAS
SOMEWHAT BETTER THAN THE 1975 MEETING, THE NEED TO IMPROVE
COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS IS OBVIOUSLY ONE OF HIGH IMPORTANCE AND
PRIORITY. BEHIND THE WFC SECRETARIAT REQUESTS LIE PLANS OF ITS
OWN TO STRENGTHN PRELIMINARY DIALOGUE WITH MEMBER GOVERN-
MENTS, AND TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE WFC SECRETARIAT
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ITSELF. ACCORDING TO THE UK PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO FAO,

THE UK IS PREPARING A RESPONSE ON A PRIORITY BASIS. END SUMMARY

1. TEXT OF LETTER FROM DR. HANNAH TO UNDER SECRETARY SISCO
IS AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE:

DEAR MR. SISCO,

WE ARE SENDING YOU TODAY A COPY OF THE REPORT OF THE
SECOND SESSION OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL. THIS REPORT WILL
BE PRESENTED TO THE NEXT SESSION OF ECOSOC IN LATE JULY IN
GENEVA. I WILL MEET WITH THE ECOSOC AND BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS
IT IN WHATEVER DETAIL THEY WISH.

I TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXTEND TO YOU MY SINCERE
APPRECIATION FOR YOUR PERSONAL PARTICIPATION IN THE SECOND
SESSION. IN MANY WAYS IT WAS A MARKED IMPROVEMENT OVER THE FIRST
SESSION OF JUNE 1975. AT THE CLOSE OF THE MEETING LATE ON
WEDNESDAY NIGHT I STRESSED THE FACT THAT THE WFC HAS NOT YET
LEARNED HOW TO EFFECTIVELY USE THE MINISTERS AND OTHER PLENI-
POTENTIARIES WHO PARTICIPATE IN OUR MEETINGS, AND THAT IS NOT
THE FAULT OF THE MINISTERS.

I WAS SINCERE IN MY REQUEST THAT YOU GIVE US THE BENEFIT OF
YOUR VIEWS AS TO HOW WE SHOULD GO ABOUT ACTUALLY ENGAGING THE
MINISTERS IN MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS ON A VERY FEW TRULY
IMPORTANT ITEMS THAT MUST BE FACED REALISTICALLY IF THE COUNCIL
IS TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH SOME OF THE MORE COMPLEX FOOD
PROBLEMS FACING THE WORLD.

WE NEED YOUR ADVICE. WITH THAT AND THE ADVICE OF YOUR
COLLEAGUES WE WILL DISCUSS WITH MEMBER GOVERNMENTS THE KEY
ISSUES THAT MIGHT WELL BE PLACED BEFORE THE COUNCIL'S NEXT
SESSION. WE NEED YOUR VIEWS AS TO HOW WE CAN MOST EFFECTIVELY
USE THE WORK OF THE PREPARATORY MEETING AND YOUR VIEWS AS TO
THE BEST TIMING FOR THAT MEETING.

FINALLY, WE WILL APPRECIATE YOUR ASSISTANCE IN THE UNITED
NATIONS BODIES, INCLUDING ECOSOC, THE SECOND COMMITTEE AND
THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE ACABQ
(ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS)
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IN OUR EFFORTS TO BUILD A STRONG AND EFFECTIVE WORLD FOOD
COUNCIL.

WE INVITE YOUR VIEWS NOW AND AS WE MOVE FORWARD IN THE
MONTHS AND YEAR AHEAD.
YOURS SINCERELY,

JOHN A. HANNAD

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

END QUOTE

2. WFC ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTORY HARRY WALTERS (US) WHO IS ACTING IN CHARGE IN ABSENCE OF DR. HANNAH AND DR. AZIZ, IS ENGAGED IN FORMULATING DETAILED PLANS TO IMPROVE SECRETARIAT AND COUNCIL PROCEDURES. SPECIFICALLY, WALTERS URGES THAT COUNCIL MEETINGS OF MINISTERS FOCUS ON TWO OR THREE ISSUES, AND THAT DIALOGUES BE DEVELOPED IN ADVANCE OF MEETING TO FACILITATE POSSIBLE POLITICAL ADJUSTMENTS AND FORMULATIONS OF CONSENSUS. HE ALSO SUGGESTS THAT DEVELOPED COUNTRIES DEVELOP DIALOGUE BEFORE AND DURING THE COUNCIL MEETING WITH MODERATE AND MOST-AFFECTED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. IN WALTERS' OPINION, PROCESS WAS RELATIVELY EFFECTIVE IN 1976 UP THROUGH PREPARATORY MEETING, AND THEN ELL SHORT FOR MINISTERIAL MEETING, LARGELY BECAUSE OF FAILURES OF THE SECRETARIAT. WALTERS POINTS OUT THAT COUNCIL IS A ONCE-YEARLY BRIEF MEETING AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL, PRECEDED BY A BRIEF PREPARATORY MEETING, AND THUS REQUIRES PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE SECRETARIAT WORK. HE SAYS WFC SECRETARIAT WILL MAKE STRONG EFFORT THIS FALL TO OBTAIN NECESSARY AUTHORIZATIONS TO MAKE ITSELF A SMALL BUT VERY GOOD SECRETARIAT, PARTLY BY ELIMINATING THE SECONDING OF ITS PROFESSIONALS FROM OTHER AGENCIES AND OBTAINING UNFINANCING OF THE ENTIRE SECRETARIAT. (COMMENT: US REPRESENTATIVE TO FAO FULLY ENDORSES WALTERS' VIEWS. HE DOES NOT RATE THE SECRETARIAT WUITE AS HIGH ON THE PREPARATORY MEETING PHASE, HOWEVER, NOTING THAT MANY OF THE BASIC DOCUMENTS WERE ISSUED TOO LATE FOR THOROUGH STUDY BY GOVERNMENTS. THE FURTHER DETERIORATION AT THE TIME OF THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEETING WAS ALSO DUE IN PART TO THE EXTRA TASKING OF THE INADEQUATE WF SECRETARIAT WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, CLIMAXING IN THE HOLDING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF THE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT MEETING OF THE IFAD PLENIPOTENTIARIES IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEETING OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL.

3. ON THE OTHER HAND, APT CRITICISMS OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL WERE EXPRESSED BY FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL SAOUMA IN A BRIEFING OF A HIGH US OFFICIAL ON JULY 7. SAOUMA SAID THE GROUP-77 VIEWS THE COUNCIL AS A FORUM IN WHICH IT CAN PRESENT LONG LISTS OF DEMANDS TO THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, AND COME BACK THE NEXT YEAR TO ASK WHAT HAS BEEN DONE ABOUT THEM. SAOUMA, SPEAKING FOR HIMSELF AND NOT PROFESSING TO REFLECT ANY CONSENSUS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES' VIEWS, SAID THAT THE IDEA THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO OBTAIN HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL DECISIONS TO DEAL WITH FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL PROBLEMS IS BASICALLY A MISTAKE, AND THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO HAVE THOSE PROBLEMS

DEALT WITH AT TECHNICAL LEVEL.

4. U.K. PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO FAO LANDYMORE, RAPPORTEUR
OF THE SECOND WFC MEETING, SAID JULY 7 THAT LONDON IS BEGIN-
NING TO PREPARE A REPLY TO DR. HANNAH'S LETTER SEEKING ADVICE
AND SUPPORT, ON A PRIORITY BASIS.VOLPE

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